

Application Number 10/510,341
Response to Restriction Requirement of August 15, 2007
Response dated September 17, 2007

REMARKS

The Applicant responds to the Office Action of August 15, 2007, as follows.

Claims 1 through 34, 36 through 47, and 49 are pending in the application.

No fee is due by this response. However, if a fee is due, it may be charged to Deposit Account 12-1210.

The Examiner requires an election of species. The Examiner identifies seven species from which the election is to be made. The applicant elects with traverse Species I as represented by Figure 1. The applicant's bases for traversing the requirement to elect species is as follows.

The applicant disagrees with the Examiner's opinion that the invention lacks a unity of invention. The unity of invention is represented by the "wicking membrane." The wicking membrane is a membrane used in aqueous systems without leakage. The wicking membrane, through its wicking or capillary action within its plane, ensures that its entire surface area facilitates the evaporation of volatile components, regardless of its position. This element of unity is in contrast to a wick wherein only a portion of the membrane, which is in direct contact with the liquid, facilitates evaporation of volatile components.

Species I through V illustrate this key element of unity of the membrane. The membrane has a significantly improved commercial value, because it can be attached to a reservoir or it can be sealed during storage in conventional ways.

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The species show that the entire surface area of the membrane facilitates the evaporation of volatile components regardless of whether:

1. the orientation of the membrane is positioned horizontally (figures 2 – 8) or vertically (figure 1);
2. the liquid is below (figures 3-8), above (figure 2), or to the side (figure 1) of the membrane;
3. the liquid is fed into the membrane directly (figures 1 – 2) or through a variety of wicking systems (figures 3 – 8);
4. the membrane is attached to the reservoir by fusion bonding (figures 1-5) or pressed (figure 6) or similar means; and
5. the membrane is sealed only in parts (figure 7) or across its entire surface (figure 8).

It is therefore the Applicant's opinion that all Species illustrate the unity of the invention and all claims are directed to this unity of invention.

However, should the Examiner disagree with the applicant's traverse of the election requirement, the applicant elects Species I as represented by Figure 1. The applicant maintains that all pending claims relate to this Species I. However, the species of Figure 1 is elected for examination and claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 12, 19, 42, and 43 read on this species and should be examined under this election.

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Favorable consideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date



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